

# Out of My Heart



By

Sharon M. Draper

A Novel Study  
by Nat and Joel Reed

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**About the author:** Nat Reed was a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years. He was a full-time instructor at Trent University in the Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, visit [novelstudies.org](http://novelstudies.org).

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## Suggestions and Expectations

Each chapter of the novel study focuses on several short sections of *Out of My Heart* and is comprised of four distinct sections:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (page 7) as well as a **Checklist** (page 6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

**Every activity need not be completed by all students.**

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases... including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story ... **and many others.**

**Themes** which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include cerebral palsy, summer camp, children with disabilities, the importance of friends and family, acceptance of others, courage, personal growth.

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## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Identification of root words
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Listing compound words
8. Identifying parts of speech
9. Identify *personification*.
10. Identify *similes*.

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Complete a Plot Outline for a Sequel
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Identify the protagonist
3. Relating personal experiences
4. Compare characters

### Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Create a poem
6. Write a description of personal feelings
7. Write a book review
8. Complete an Observation Chart
9. Complete a KWS Chart
10. Create a friendly letter.

### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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## Synopsis

Melody, the huge-hearted heroine of *Out of My Mind*, is a year older, and a year braver. And now with her Medi-talker, she feels nothing's out of her reach, not even summer camp. There *have* to be camps for differently-abled kids like her, and she's going to sleuth one out. A place where she can trek through a forest, fly on a zip line, and even ride on a horse! A place where maybe she really can finally make a real friend, make her own decisions, and even do things on her own—the dream!

By the light of flickering campfires and the power of thunderstorms, through the terror of unexpected creatures in cabins and the first sparkle of a crush, Melody's about to discover how brave and strong she really is. [Summary Courtesy of the Publisher]

## Author Biography

Sharon M. Draper

Sharon M. Draper is a two-time Coretta Scott King Award-winning author, most recently for *Copper Sun*, and previously for *Forged by Fire*. She's also the recipient of the 2012 Jeremiah Ludington Award, which recognizes lifetime achievement in children's literature, as well as the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Author Award for New Talent for *Tears of a Tiger* and Coretta Scott King Author Honors for *The Battle of Jericho* and *November Blues*. Her other books include *Just Another Hero*, *Romiette and Julio*, *Darkness Before Dawn*, and *Double Dutch*. She lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she taught high school English for 25 years. For more information, visit her online at [sharondraper.com](http://sharondraper.com) [Courtesy of the publisher]





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*By Sharon M. Draper*

Name:

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## Chapters 1-4



### Before you read this section:

The **protagonist** of *Out of My Heart* is the Melody Brooks, a 12 year-old girl who has cerebral palsy. There are probably not too many novels that feature a main character who cannot speak and is consigned to a wheelchair. Think of one reason why having such a protagonist would be intriguing for the reader, and one reason why it might not be.




### Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

protruded	iridescent	complicated	computations
emphatic	adverse	therapeutic	protocols

1. Many of the mathematical \_\_\_\_\_ were extremely complicated.
2. I wondered about the magic of having \_\_\_\_\_ floaties attached to my body.
3. I'm sure they have safety \_\_\_\_\_ that are NASA-worthy.
4. The jagged piece of metal \_\_\_\_\_ dangerously from the car's bumper.
5. Have you noticed any \_\_\_\_\_ reactions from the meds?
6. I will ensure that you get the best medical and \_\_\_\_\_ care possible.
7. The pirate map directing us to the treasure was very \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The teacher gave an \_\_\_\_\_ *no* to our idea.

# Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story for *Chapter One*?


2. How would you describe Melody's personality? Give two possible characteristics supported by proof from the story.

	Characteristic	Proof
1		
2		

3. What reason did Mrs. V give to Penny for not capturing a firefly?


4. Why did Melody say that she was *a handful*. *An armful*?


5. Irony is defined as *a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result*. Why did Melody find it ironic that Molly and Claire were going to mermaid camp?


6. Melody named her Medi-Talker \_\_\_\_\_. The librarian's name was \_\_\_\_\_.

7. What did Melody mean by, *I know mountains of stuff, but I'm pretty much stuck in a valley?*


8. What seems to be the main reason that Melody wants to go to summer camp?


9. Why did Melody object to people labelling her (i.e. special needs)?


10. Why did Melody's mom feel that the camp described in the Green Glades Therapeutic Recreational Camp brochure would have safety protocols that are NASA- worthy?


11. CP (Cerebral Palsy) is a disease. True or False

12. What were two of the safety measures the family had taken to prevent Melody from injuring herself?


## Language Activities



**A. Personification** is giving human qualities to something that is not human. An example from this section is, . . . *the mental part of my brain kicks butt*. Explain why this is an example of personification.


Create an example of personification to describe a car's horn.


As you continue to read through the novel be on the lookout for other examples of this literary device. If you should find one, come back to this question and enter it below.


**B. A simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from the novel is, . . . *it (the library) smells like history and mystery and book bindings*. In this example, what is being compared?



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Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a mermaid swimming


b) a horseback ride


## C. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



a) read the clue in the right-hand column.

b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in this section of **Out of My Heart**.

Word	Anagram	Clue
monster		Trusted advisors.
shoes		Flexible tubes.
breath		He/she spends time in the water.
horse		Seaside.
option		Concoction; a healing liquid.
mental		A passionate expression of sorrow.
scared		These trees grow well near the water.

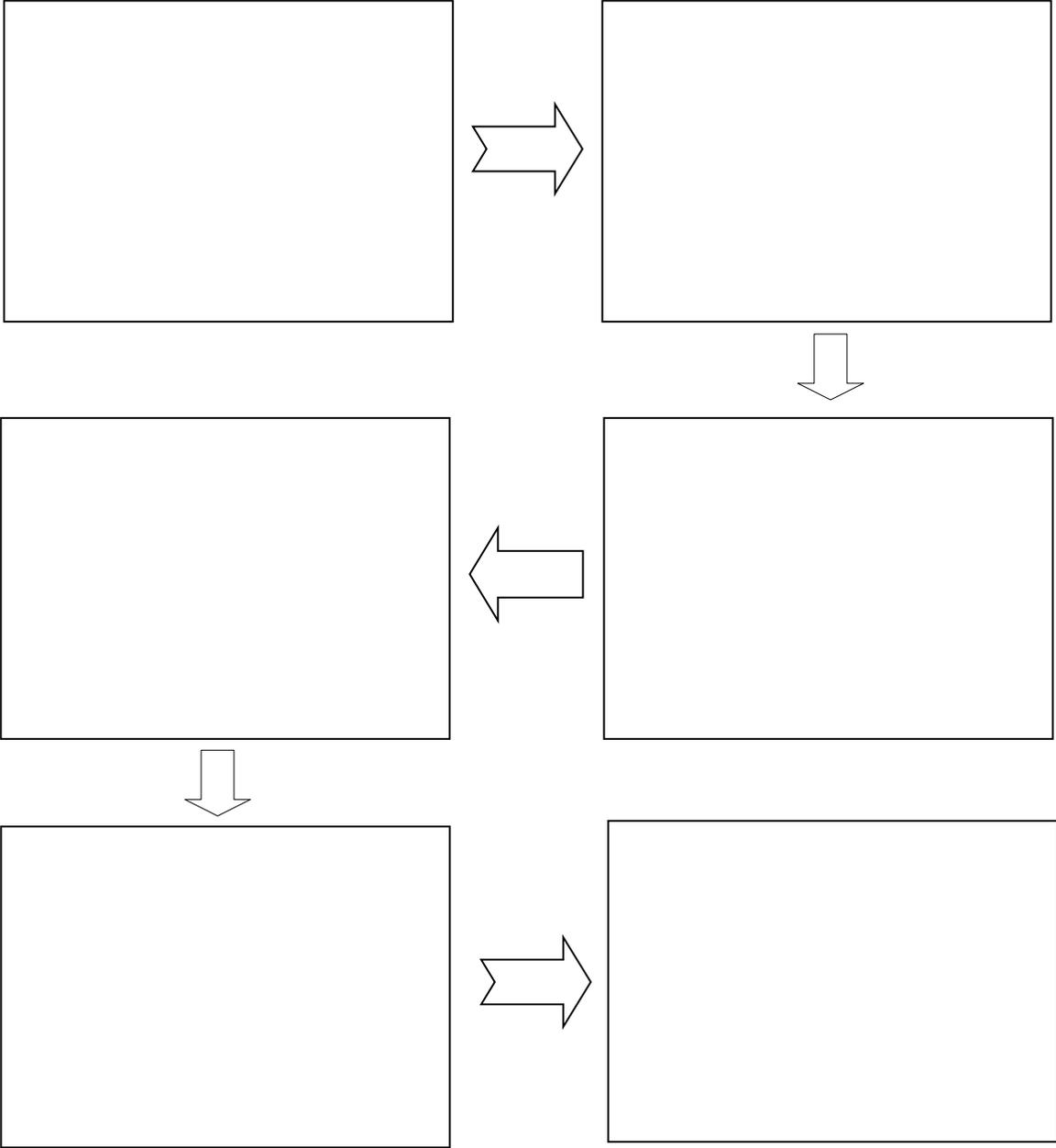
## D. Three-Syllable Words

Find twelve three-syllable words from this section and list them below.

1		7	
2		8	
3		9	
4		10	
5		11	
6		12	

# E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this section. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



# Extension Activity



## A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of this section.



Beginning Picture:	Beginning:
Middle Picture:	Middle:
Concluding Picture:	Concluding: